

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method for controlling access to a computer network, comprising:
 - gaining access to said computer network by use of a portable computing device;
 - reading biometric data peculiar to a user by the use of a biometric data reader coupled to said portable computing device;
 - comparing said biometric data to biometric data stored in said computer network for the purpose of identifying the user;
 - and,
 - denying further access to said computer network if said data comparison fails to identify said user as an authorized user.
2. A method as in Claim 1 wherein said access to said computer network is by use of a wireless connection.
3. A method as in Claim 1 wherein said biometric data is a fingerprint.
4. A method as in Claim 1 wherein said biometric data is an iris scan.
5. A method as in Claim 1 wherein said biometric data comprises one or more measured electrical characteristics.
6. A method as in Claim 1 wherein said biometric data can be programmed into said portable computing device by a remote station on said computer network.

7. A method as in Claim 1 wherein said biometric data can be removed from said portable computing device by a remote station on said computer network.
8. A method for controlling access to a portable computing device, comprising:
- reading biometric data peculiar to a user;
 - storing said biometric data in said portable computing device;
 - comparing said biometric data with previously stored biometric data for the purpose of identifying the user; and,
 - preventing access in the user is not identified as an authorized user.
9. A method as in Claim 7 wherein said biometric data is a fingerprint.
10. A method as in Claim 7 wherein said biometric data is an iris scan.
11. A method as in Claim 7 wherein said biometric data comprises one or more measured electrical characteristics.
12. A method as in Claim 7 wherein said biometric data stored in said portable computing device can be controlled by a remote station on said computer network.
13. An apparatus for controlling access to a computer network, comprising:
- a computer network, said computer network comprising one or more computer workstations, wherein access to said computer network is provided by said workstations;
 - a portable computing device, said portable computing device providing wireless access to said computer network;

a biometric data reading device coupled to said portable computing device;

a data storage device for storing biometric data capable of identifying one and only one user; and,

a wireless communication device coupled to said computer network, capable of enabling the loading and removing of said biometric data stored in said portable computing device.

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An apparatus as in Claim 12 wherein said portable computing apparatus comprises;

a bus;

a memory unit coupled to said bus;

a data storage device coupled to said bus, capable of storing said biometric data;

a biometric data reader coupled to said bus;

a communication device coupled to said bus for communicating with a computer network; and,

a processor coupled to said bus, said processor for performing a method for identifying a user by use of said biometric data, said method comprising the steps of;

Reading applicable biometric data; and,

Comparing said biometric data with said biometric data stored in said memory unit.

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An apparatus as in Claim 12 wherein said portable computing apparatus is a personal data assistant (PDA).

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An apparatus as in Claim 12 wherein said biometric data reader is implemented as part of the portable computing apparatus.

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An apparatus as in Claim 12 wherein said biometric data is a fingerprint.

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An apparatus as in Claim 12 wherein said biometric data is an iris scan.

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An apparatus as in Claim 12 wherein said biometric data is any electronically storable identifying biometric data.

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An apparatus as in Claim 12 wherein said biometric data comprises one or more measured electrical characteristics.

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An apparatus as in Claim 12 wherein said computer network further comprises a remote station connected to said computer network.

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An apparatus as in Claim 20 wherein said remote station is for performing a method of network access control, said method comprising:

uploading said biometric data from said portable computing apparatus;

downloading said biometric data to said portable computing apparatus; and,

erasing said biometric data from said portable computing apparatus.